

WELSHPOOL U3A NEWSLETTER 2025

As we step into the final weeks of summer, I'm pleased to share with you updates and opportunities to help you get the most out of your time with the U3a.

The past couple of months have seen a number of new and rejuvenated groups emerge: Gardening, Poetry, Film and Chuffers not forgetting our newly to be formed Bowls group. I look forward to seeing these groups bring fresh energy to our U3a family. A heartfelt thanks to the members who proposed these ideas and will be leading them. If you'd like to join or learn more or start a group please speak to Elaine or groups@welshpoolanddistrictu3a.co.uk

This month sees the reintroduction of our newsletter thanks to Roy's hard efforts, designed to keep us better informed and connected and inspired with what's happening in our Branch.

We continue to try and attract new members to get involved. A great idea of bring a friend either to a meeting or group event I'm sure will bring results as I hope will our attendance at two local shows this coming month, Guilsfield and Llanfair. I can't stress enough how important it is that we do everything possible to increase our membership number.

I'm encouraged to see that our poster campaign is producing results, even if the results aren't immediate we're building an awareness at every step. Each poster we place is a chance to spark interest, invite engagement and make someone feel welcome, it's easy to underestimate the ripple effect. So please keep placing and keep promoting.

Posters are available from Annette.

I hope you can make it to this months meeting 6th August 10am The Cowshacc. We have what promises to be a really exciting talk

by Rod Evans on Murray the Hump, real name Llewelyn Morris Humphreys a local with roots in Carno who became Al Capone's right hand man. The talk will lead us through the sharp turns and shadowy paths of Humphrey's life - his rise from street level crime to master manipulator and the impact his methods had on organised crime of decades to come.

We're delighted to invite you to our upcoming GROUPS DAY a chance to celebrate our shared interests, connect with new faces and explore the fantastic variety of groups we have to offer.

Enjoy a light refreshment while mingling with fellow members and learn more about our vibrant branch. Whether you're an active participant or simply curious this is a relaxed space to get involved.

GROUPS DAY

Wednesday 3rd September.

Venue: The Cowshacc.

Time: 11.30am - 3pm

Light Refreshment available

I look forward to seeing you all at our August monthly meeting.

Alan, Chair

Psychology/NLP group

Our group has been going for several years, although we've had a temporary pause for a few months. However, by the time you see this we should have resumed our meetings. We're a lively group and cover a wide range of topics under the broad umbrella of psychology. NLP, for those who don't know, is short for Neuro-Linguistic Programming and is allied to psychology in some ways. It's about helping people get good

at things – and those things might be developing their confidence, being healthier, learning new skills, growing relationships, running a business, taking part in sports and much more besides. We meet on the last Wednesday of each month, from 2.00pm to around 4.00pm at Leighton. We have a break for tea and spend a lot of time laughing. To find out more please contact Carol Harris, on 01938 553430 or email info@carolharris.uk

Poetry Group

The first meeting of the new u3a Poetry Group was on 10th July at the Raven, Welshpool. Attended by five members we sat outside, shaded by a table canopy, enjoying a drink and chatting. Very pleasant.

We considered venue and for the time being the Raven seems convenient. The next meeting is planned for the second Thursday in the month, that being 14th August at 1400.

Not at all compulsory, we have suggested a theme of 'water'. If you could write or source a piece for reading, maybe discussion, please do so. Hopefully, we have another two members joining us at the next meeting. Roy.

Walking Group. Penny Tozer.

Hello Everyone, On our walk yesterday several members queried the walk we have on our program for the 1st August. To my shame I had not put this one in my diary and therefore missed chasing up the details. Before I could contact the leader he rang me to say due to family commitments he was unable to do it. I have therefore made the decision to cancel this extra walk and so our next walk will be 22nd of August, being the 4th Friday of the month as usual.

Put your thinking caps on and we will decide if we continue with one walk a month or if you would like to do more. If more is the request, I would look for one of you be my deputy or assistant.

Strollers,

Hope all good with you, our next stroll is on Monday 11th August starting at 1030am.

We're meeting up at the Back Street car park in Newtown for a leisurely stroll along the river. Betty's leading and it's mainly a level stroll although there are a few steps to negotiate.

If you don't fancy going the complete distance 2.5miles just stroll as far as you feel comfortable with.

Lunch is at the Cafi Hafan, it's a light meal choice. Menu attached.

Please let Alan know if you're coming and would like to be booked in for lunch.

Directions: Back Street car park Newtown Note: Car Parking charges apply.

What3words: retain display ecologist



FOOD MENU

SERVED DAILY 9AM - 3.30PM



French Pastries - £3.00
*All butter croissant
 *Pain aux chocolate
 *Pain aux raisin
 *Raspberry croissant (VG)

Toast with butter - £2.00
Two slices of homemade toast with butter

Toasted Teacake & butter - £3



SAVOURIES



Sausage roll - £2.80
Home made with secret Hafan filling

Vegetable roll (V) - £2.80
Home made with Hafan made filling

Veg Twists/Parcels - £2.80
Puff pastry with cheese and veg

Crisps - £2.00
Grab bags - choice of varieties

Special of the Week
Please see specials board in the cafe

ALL DAY BREAKFAST

Brecwast Hafan - £9.95
1 Fried Pig sausage, 2 bacon, free range egg, mushrooms, beans, hash brown served with toast

Brecwast Garden (V) - £9.95
2 Vegan sausages, Haloumi, free range egg, mushrooms, beans, hash browns served with toast

Eggs Benedict (V) - £7.95
Muffin topped with poached egg and creamy hollandaise sauce

Optional Extras
with Bacon +£1
 with Smoked Salmon +£2

Breakfast Baguette/Sandwich - £4.20
Fried Pig sizzling bacon or sausage or free range egg served on a crusty baguette/sandwich, served with a choice of tomato or brown sauce

Extra items +£1.20

Beans on Toast (V) - £4.00
Savory baked Beans served over two pieces of toast with cheese + £1.00

Crumpets with butter (V) - £3.00
Toasted crumpets served with butter, jam or marmalade

Granola & Yoghurt (GF) £4.00
Oats free oats combined with fruit & nuts, layered with greek yogurt and maple syrup

HOT FOOD
Please ask about our vegan & gluten free options

Panini/Toastie - £8.50 **Baguette/ Sandwiches - £8.00**
Small toastie - £5.50 **Small baguette/sandwich - £5.00**
all served with homemade salads*** and crisps

- Ham & cheese
- Tuna mayo
- Bacon, brie and cranberry
- Mozzarella, sundried tomato & pesto
- Falafal, roasted veg & hummus

Jacket Potato - £9.00
Served with garden salad, homemade salads and crisps

- Cheese and spring onion
- Tuna mayo
- Cheese
- Coronation Chicken
- Beans

** Extra items £1.00

Soup of the day - £6
Please see specials board in the cafe
 Served with a bread roll and butter

Please inform us of any allergies or dietary requirements before ordering.

Gardening & Strollers Collaboration

Llangedwyn Hall – a well preserved formal terraced garden.

Tuesday August 12th start 6.30pm

Cost - £5.00 donation for Llangedwyn Church.

We have a wonderful opportunity to visit the historic Llangedwyn Hall for a conducted tour of the beautiful grounds and terraced gardens. Ian will kindly show us around and share his knowledge having been the Head Gardener here for many years.

The U3A Strollers Group will be joining us on this visit, we'll have use of the kitchen to make tea/coffee, perhaps you'd like to bring some snacks to share.

Directions: What3words: punk tumblers press

Llangedwyn Hall – SY10 9JW is on B4396 LOOK OUT for the U3a BANNER.

If you are not a member of the Strollers Group then please let me know if you would like to come ASAP or before Monday 4th August

Alan

Email: alanmsmithers@gmail.com

Welshpool Local Research Group (WLRG)

Would you like to join a lively new research group? This is an opportunity for us to discover more about Welshpool, its way of life, and the benefits of living, working, and enjoying retirement here.

We'll start by developing and testing a flexible research process using our findings to learn more about our community and what's on offer in the town.

We'll collaborate with other u3a groups and organisations and then present the information we collect in an attention-grabbing way, which will also help to raise the profile and promote the work of u3a.

I never knew that about Welshpool

Together, we'll show what makes Welshpool special and why it's a great place to visit or live. We'll pool our resources and uncover remarkable individuals, clubs, support groups, businesses, services, facilities, fascinating facts, and snippets of information.

How can I be involved?

The new group will build a diverse team of enthusiastic citizen researchers. We will have fun sharing skills and knowledge, gathering information, and learning new stuff. Group members will decide what we cover.

Who is this aimed at?

The group will be of interest to curious individuals (nosey parkers), quizzers, local historians, and anyone who cares deeply about Welshpool and the talented people who live and work here. If you have research,

admin, marketing, PR, ITC, graphic design, or writing, proofreading, and editing skills that would be particularly useful, but anyone interested is welcome to come and find out more.

Want to find out more?

Elaine: groups@welshpoolanddistrictu3a.org.uk

John Davies

I have a few vacancies for a guided tour of Montgomery Castle (morning) and Montgomery town in the afternoon on Saturday 2nd August. There will be an optional buffet lunch available at the Dragon Hotel.

If any Welshpool and District u3a members might be interested they should contact John Davies by email ([johndavies856@msn.com](mailto: johndavies856@msn.com)) or phone ([01588 620936](tel:01588620936)) for full details.

Local History Group. **Visit to the Snailbeach Lead Mine**

On Wednesday, 16th July, members of the History Group visited the Snailbeach Lead Mine. It proved to be a most interesting experience. As many U3A members will know, Mid Wales and its surrounding area boast a rich mining history, with sites dedicated to gold, copper, lead, and slate. Notable attractions include the Dolaucothi Gold Mines, Sygun Copper Mine, and Llanymynech, which shows evidence of mining in Roman times. The Cwmystwyth metal mines, the largest in Mid Wales, and Snailbeach (just inside modern Shropshire) offer insights into silver, zinc, and lead mining from the Bronze Age to the early 20th century.

Our group benefited from a guided tour conducted by volunteer Julian Bromhead, who has extensive knowledge and experience of exploring the mine down to its lower levels, where now only experienced cavers are permitted. For "normal" visitors, access to two levels is possible, although a "stiff" walk is needed to reach the mine from the village car park. Workings at Snailbeach finally ceased in 1955, so there are many 20th-century elements to see, such as the remains of the Snailbeach District Railway, a 2-foot 4-inch gauge mineral railway used to transport the ore (galena) to the smelter in the valley and then to the railhead at Minsterley, where the lead was transhipped to the main line railway for delivery to the end user.

We were advised that Wellington boots were required for the underground portion of the tour. If you do visit, this is sound advice, as even though we have had a prolonged dry spell, there are several inches of water to walk through to explore the mine. Hard hats are provided and are absolutely essential; I lost count of the number of times my hat contacted the roof, as there are quite a few sections where the roof is low. Of course, there is no light at all in the mine, so you will have a "miner's lamp" attached to your hard hat.

It is quite thought-provoking when you see the working conditions. In the 18th and 19th centuries, miners worked by the light of tallow candles, which they had to purchase, so they would only use one or two candles. The main mineral extracted was Galena, from which lead is obtained, but there were also significant deposits of Barytes, a mineral composed of barium

sulphate (BaSO₄). It was used in the paint industry as a filler and pigment, and sometimes in the paper industry for high-quality white paper. For most of the mine's life, holes were drilled by hand with a long metal rod sharpened at one end by the on-site blacksmith. You can see the blacksmith's shop on the site, and it is still quite capable of operating as a forge, although it has been some time since its last use. The rod was driven into the rock with a large hammer until a depth of about two feet. The hole was then filled with gunpowder, sealed with a lump of clay with a fuse inserted, then lit. Of course, an explosion did not happen every time, so someone would have to go back and see why it did not "go off." Life was very dangerous in those times. If you survived, then silicosis would almost certainly shorten your life; many would not see a "happy retirement" as most of us have achieved.

I would thoroughly recommend a visit, and if you have grandchildren (minimum age 8 to go down the mine), then it is well worth taking them to see what life was like and how fortunate they are to live in the times they do, and how fortunate we were as well.

Here is a YouTube video link to an aerial view of the Snailbeach Mine, and as a bonus, some great music to accompany the video ('The Lark Ascending' by Vaughan Williams):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKnZlfrebuw&t=11s>

The Local History Group

Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month in the COWSHACC, at 2.00pm, unless otherwise advised as we do try and arrange Field Trips during the warmer months.

We aim to cover topics of local history which is loosely based on the Welshpool area, but we have looked at topics interest to members with a 20 miles radius of Welshpool.

18 th June	Powis Castle Vist
16 th July	Snailbeach Lead Mines
20 th August	No Meeting
17 th September	10 minute Presentations – Various Members
15 th October	TBA
19 th November	A Railway Talk - Vince Howells
17 th December	Planning Meeting for 2026

Lunch Group. Paul Harris.

We meet on the third Wednesday of each month for lunch at 12.30pm at a 'local' pub or restaurant. We don't pre-order from the menu before arrival.

This extends the time for lunch but does limit how many of us can come, as many places will only accept pre-orders for larger groups.

This limits how many members we can accommodate and we are close to our max at present.

20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Thank you to all the members that joined in our 20th Anniversary Celebration, I hope you all enjoyed yourselves and the refreshments.

It was encouraging to see so many members spanning our 20yr history.

None of it would have been possible had it not been for the tireless hard work put in by Annette assisted by Elaine, it was a pretty exhausting day, but I think you'll agree worth it.

We almost got it right, if you were concerned about the leftovers, they went to Meals on Wheels who were Thrilled, and sent out as a picnic everything was used apart from a few limp lettuce leaves that did go in the bin.

And as for the lemonade well that will go towards a picnic in the summer holidays for special needs children perfect to go with "jam sandwiches".

It doesn't stop plans are ready being put in place for Groups Day in September, and our Christmas Lunch.

Thanks again for your support. See you all soon. The Catering Crew.



u3a History

In February 2005 the 'County Times' advertised an introductory meeting to be held in the Town Hall, aimed at retired or partially retired people explaining the Aims & Principles of U3A. This meeting was to determine if there was enough interest in the Welshpool area to set up a new U3A.

A steady stream of people arrived on March 2nd in the Corn Exchange. All 50 chairs were filled, with more people sitting on tables or standing, probably about 70 people in total.

Those introducing U3A, were Mike Long (Educational & Development Officer on the National Executive), Doug. Jones (Trustee for Wales), Ron Gates (Chairman of Shrewsbury U3A & Travel Network advisor), Mary Tithers (of Market Drayton & Whitchurch U3As) who spoke on the Region (now called Shropshire Network), lastly Vivienne Stokes (of Oswestry U3A) who explained the interest/study groups and how they are formed and run.

Twelve members of Oswestry U3A lent their support and made coffee.

A list of speakers provisionally booked for the coming year was displayed, and as well as a list of possible interest groups. The encouraging results of a questionnaire given to attendees saw 35 signing up as members, a steering committee of 10 and a few willing to lead a group. These results were a clear indication that a U3A to be started in Welshpool was a possibility. So, the rest as they say, is HISTORY.

Back in the Here and Now

A Full Committee meeting was held on the 31st July, outcome to be advised.

Tuesday 12th August 6.30pm, gardening & strollers group tour of Llangedwyn Hall. Interested, not a member contact alanmsmithers@gmail.com

Wellness Stroll

Come and give the Wellness Stroll a try, great way to get some exercise and socialise.

We meet every 1st, 3rd and 4th Monday of the Month, 10.30am, at Powis Castle car park.

Consists of short stroll and morning refreshment with time to socialise.

Contact: Alan. alanmsmithers@gmail.com

Strollers Group:

11th August 10.30am stroll along river at Newtown & optional lunch.

Bowls Group:

Starting September register your interest: groups@welshpoolanddistrictu3a.org.uk

Bring a friend Month, great idea from Sarah and well worth giving it a try in an attempt to attract new members, whether it's to the Monthly meeting or any of our groups activities.

Board Game Group

We are changing our venue, time and day. Possibly will appeal to more members in consequence.

Starting in August we shall be meeting at The Raven, at 10.30am the first Friday of each month, commencing 1st August. We play a mixture of word or number games depending on preference.

Trish Roberts

Dog Friendly Walking Group – August 2025

Weather-permitting, the dog-friendly walking group will meet on Thursday 14th (Luggy Valley) and Thursday 28th (Rainbow Trails). More information is available from Karin Thompson karinmthompson@aol.com

Please note: we have recently expanded the group's remit to admit members who don't have a dog to accompany them. The primary purpose of the group continues to be giving canine members the chance to socialise so a love of dogs remains essential.

Chuffers

I lead a new group called the Chuffers. We plan to use trains to go on days outings and initially we will do 3 trips per year. No firm dates have been fixed but we are planning to go to Aberdovey for the day in early October and in January we are going to St James Street Station, Liverpool for a day at the Albert Docks. The third trip is as yet not fixed. Because we are a new group, we may find that we need to adjust our format but we already have a number of members signed up to come on the trips we have planned.

I can be contacted on:-

paul.e.lucock@btinternet.com

07885-865837 or 01691-828076

Next u3a Monthly meeting 6 August

Guilfield Show - Thursday 14 August. We are having a stand to try and raise awareness about the u3a and recruit more members. Please let Alan Smithers (chair) know if you can help at all info@welshpoolanddistrictu3a.org.uk (>info@welshpoolanddistrictu3a.org.uk)

Llanfair Show - Saturday 30 August . We hope to have a stand here as well so any help most appreciated ,contact Alan or Annette (as above or publicity@welshpoolanddistrict.org.uk)

Groups Open Day Wednesday 3 September

Groups to provide up to date information about their groups (venue, days, times) including any photos or examples of their work

This is also a recruitment opportunity so if we want to attract more members, and keep our branch alive, they need to know what we have to offer

Do you have an interest or hobby to share ? Bring a few ideas to the open day with a view to arranging a first meeting to confirm numbers interested and take it further regarding venue ,days etc

Xmas Lunch Wednesday 3 December

More details in next months issue

WANTED: Your u3a needs you

Someone with **IT skills** to help members with, basic functions - opening and responding to e-mails, posting items on Facebook, how to mute / turn off phones, using What's App etc. either as a talk or in small groups.

Also **Entertainments Manager**, someone to organise day trips, theatre trips, visits to Stately Homes ,mystery coach tours etc.

Anyone interested ? or just need more information contact Alan on: info@welshpoolanddistrictu3a.org.uk

Art & Design group (previously Learn to Draw)

Will be meeting from 10.30 to 12.30 at The Raven every 2 weeks from 7 July.

Why not call in & see what the group do & consider joining them.

All welcome! No fee, just enthusiasm to discover and develop your artistic side, while enjoying a hot drink or something cooling.